

COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT REFORM
CONGRESSMAN TOM DAVIS, CHAIRMAN



NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release
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Contact: Robert White / Drew Crockett
(202) 225-5074

Chairman Davis and 15 Members of Congress Ask
Secretary Ridge to Release General Aviation Security
Guidelines for Reagan National Airport

*Request Aimed at Speeding Return of Private Aircraft to Airport, Which Has
Been Closed to General Aviation Since September 11th Attacks*

Washington, D.C. – Congressman Tom Davis (R-VA) was joined by 15 Members of Congress this week in asking Homeland Security Secretary Tom Ridge to help speed the return of General Aviation to Ronald Reagan Washington National Airport by publicly releasing the security guidelines business craft will have to follow once the airport is reopened to their use.

The letter to Secretary Ridge was signed by key members of the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee, including Chairman Don Young (R-AK) and Ranking Member James L. Oberstar (D-MN), as well as members of the regional congressional delegation such as Congressman James P. Moran (D-VA) and Congresswoman Eleanor Holmes Norton (D-D.C.).

“The closure of Reagan National to general aviation has cost the region more than \$175 million,” Davis said. “All of us recognize the need for Reagan National to have a unique security plan in place, and the general aviation industry has continued to demonstrate its willingness to meet any security requirements deemed necessary by the Department. We think giving the operators a head start in complying with the security plan will help speed up the process of getting general aviation back at the airport.”

The full text of the letter follows:

July 28, 2004

The Honorable Tom Ridge
Secretary
U.S. Department of Homeland Security

Washington, D.C. 20528

Dear Secretary Ridge,

As of March 2004, the total economic cost associated with closing Ronald Reagan Washington National Airport (DCA) to general aviation (GA) was approximately \$177 million. According to the National Business Aviation Association, over \$21 million of this amount represents the loss of employment, personal income, business revenue, and government tax revenue. These financial losses were calculated for the jurisdictions of the District of Columbia, Virginia, and Maryland.

We recognize keeping DCA closed to GA is not only a financial issue, but also a security issue. We commiserate with the tremendous professional responsibility placed on you, and the Department, to analyze threats and ensure the safety of American citizens. However, we also commiserate with the GA community in its desire to access DCA and its willingness to adhere to any new security regulations imposed on it by the Department.

P.L. 108-176 (Vision 100) directs you to “develop and implement a security plan to permit general aviation aircraft to land and take off at Ronald Reagan Washington Airport.” It is our understanding that the Transportation Security Administration, with the assistance of the United States Secret Service, has submitted the security plan for the Department’s review. It is also our understanding you are committed to keeping DCA closed to GA this calendar year.

We request that you release the appropriate sections of the security plan that provide security guidelines to the GA industry. This information will enable GA operators to move forward in complying with the security plan, so they will be fully prepared to be security qualified operators. In addition, airports determined to be part of the initial phase of the security plan can begin the work to ready themselves for the restoration of access to DCA. We see no security threat in educating industry as to what its future responsibilities entail.

Sincerely,

Tom Davis, Chairman
Committee on Government Reform

Don Young, Chairman
Committee on Transportation and
Infrastructure

James L. Oberstar, Ranking Member
Committee on Transportation and
Infrastructure

John Mica, Chairman
Aviation Subcommittee
Committee on Transportation and
Infrastructure

Peter A. DeFazio, Ranking Member
Aviation Subcommittee
Committee on Transportation and
Infrastructure

Max Burns
Member of Congress

John J. Duncan, Jr.
Member of Congress

Vernon Ehlers
Member of Congress

Sam Graves
Member of Congress

Robin Hayes
Member of Congress

James P. Moran
Member of Congress

Jerry Moran
Member of Congress

Eleanor Holmes Norton
Member of Congress

Steve Pearce
Member of Congress

Dennis Rehberg
Member of Congress

Pete Sessions
Member of Congress

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